

- (b) a transmitter, on the person of said player in said sports game, that, upon actuation by said switch, emits a predetermined radio frequency signal;
- (c) a receiver that receives said radio frequency signal from said transmitter and converts said radio frequency signal into an electrical signal indicating receipt of command from said player;
- (d) a timer that clocks game time and that can be stopped and resumed;
- (e) means to operate said timer in response to receipt of said electrical signal from said receiver;
- (f) a storage device containing predetermined audio files and that outputs a data stream for the purpose of making said audible announcements;
- (g) means to operate said storage device upon receipt of said electrical signal from said receiver;
- (h) an electro-acoustic device that, upon receipt of said data stream from said storage device, converts said data stream into audible acoustic sounds;

whereby verbal said audible announcements are broadcast for players and spectators to hear in response to remote signaling by said player.

19. cont.
36. The system of claim 35 additionally comprising:

- (a) processor means to operate said storage device causing said storage device to generate an output selected from the group consisting of data and signal to said electro-acoustic device at predetermined times as clocked by said timer;
- whereby verbal audible announcements and other game sounds are broadcast at predetermined game times, for players and spectators to hear, in response to the occurrence of said predetermined game times indicated by said timer.

37. The system of claim 35 additionally comprising:

- (a) a second timer to keep track of time for predetermined short time intervals within said game;
- (b) said storage device to include files of predetermined times of said second timer;

(c) said processor to include initiation of audible annunciations upon occurrence of said predetermined times of said second timer.

10' cont.
38. The system of claim 35 wherein said audio files are stored digitally.

39. The system of claim 35 additionally comprising a visual display that displays remaining time on said timer.

Response to New References Cited

Applicants have carefully reviewed the new references cited by the Examiner, and respectfully submit the following response:

Poole (US 6,369,697) teaches a visual time display remotely controlled by umpires or referees in officiated games. This is not prior art for the present invention because the present invention discloses a means for the players themselves to control timing during play action and furthermore discloses the means for controlling audible announcements, not visual displays. The benefit of the present invention over Poole are, first, no officials are required and thus ^{not claiming} informal unofficiated games can enjoy the same quality timing as more formal officiated games, and, secondly, the use of sound announcements rather than visual displays makes the system much more lightweight, rugged, and inexpensive – in short, more practical. Poole cannot be prior art in any event since the filing of the present invention predates Poole.

Schneider, Jr. (US 6,181,236) teaches a device used by an official that causes a display to occur when the official blows his whistle in a sports game. The present invention, in contrast, is used by the players themselves during play. During play action it is neither safe nor practical for the players to blow whistles. Furthermore, the only audible signal is a whistle in Schneider, Jr. whereas in the present invention, verbal announcements are made informing players and spectators what is happening and how much time is left.

DePoortere (US 6,144,620) discloses a device that does not have wireless communication, is used by officials rather than players, produces a visual display rather than announcements, and makes no effort to inform all the players and spectators of significant time events. It thus cannot serve as prior art for the present invention.

Costabile (US 5,293,354) does not serve as prior art because it is designed for officiated games and its output is in the form of a visual display. The same arguments used against Poole apply here.

Abbott (US 3,651,507) discloses a system that is actuated by a referee's whistle which causes a transmission that in the end activates a score board clock. As argued under Schneider, Jr., it is neither safe nor practical for players to blow whistles during a game, and the end result in Abbott is activation of a display whereas it is an verbal audible announcement in the present invention.

Castelli et al (US 4,045,788) discloses a portable scoreboard. There is no actuation by players, no transmitter, no wireless communication, and no audible announcements. It is not relevant to the present invention.

Beierwalter et al (US 4,263,736) discloses a reconfigurable scoreboard that could be quickly reconverted, for example, from basketball to volleyball format. The arguments applied against Castelli apply here. There is no relevance to the present invention.

Sweeney (5,027,102) teaches a scoreboard for judges in boxing events. It is designed for officials, not participants. It does not even contain a timer. In boxing the timing for each round is automatic and preset and is not controlled by the participants or the judges. This invention is not relevant to the present invention.

Freeman (US 5,084,695) discloses a closed system for umpires. The invention is not wireless. There is a tone generated for the umpire's use only, and is not broadcast to players. It differs from the present invention in that it lacks remote control, player